

Western University  
Department of Visual Arts

I acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Neutral peoples, on lands connected to several Treaties including Treaty 6 London Township, Treaty 7 Sombra Township, Treaty 21 Longwoods and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. This place continues to be home to diverse Indigenous peoples who are recognized as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors to society.

## AH 2662G ART AND MASS MEDIA Winter 2023

**Professor:** C. Sprengler

**Office Hours:** By appointment (please email and we will set up a time for a Zoom call)

**Email:** [csprengl@uwo.ca](mailto:csprengl@uwo.ca)

### Teaching Assistants

Shawn Casado [mcasado@uwo.ca](mailto:mcasado@uwo.ca)

Ana Moyer [amoyer9@uwo.ca](mailto:amoyer9@uwo.ca)

Hannah Verster [hvester@uwo.ca](mailto:hvester@uwo.ca)

### Class Time:

Asynchronous – lectures posted every Monday morning on our OWL course site.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This asynchronous online course examines the complex relationships that have emerged since the mid-twentieth century between art and the mass media, particularly film and television. We will begin with an exploration of the theoretical discourses that help us analyze and contextualize image-making practices. Then, we consider the collaborations and conflicts that have marked the intersections between the art world and the worlds of cinema and television. Specifically, we will focus on how artists have engaged with the content and institutional structures of the mass media as well as how the mass media has represented, and responded to, artists and the art world. This course is lecture-driven. There is no final exam.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

### 1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge

Students will have a thorough knowledge of the key critical and theoretical frameworks that pertain to the practices being studied and will be able to engage with works of art and other media according to those frameworks. Specifically, this course will familiarize students with the works, theoretical concepts and debates central to investigations into the relationship between art and various forms of mass media.

### 2. Knowledge of Methodologies

Students will acquire the discursive/theoretical vocabularies that are utilized in debates within the field, and will demonstrate their knowledge of the field through the deployment of the vocabulary in writing.

### 3. Application of Knowledge

Students will utilize their knowledge of appropriate methods, the vocabularies pertinent to the field, and their ability to make appropriate judgements, in order to develop a sound argument regarding a particular practice or historical development, and will be able to defend their argument according to a knowledge of scholarly works. Moreover, students will learn to evaluate written texts, analyze a diverse array of visual imagery and think critically about the relationship between art objects and their contexts.

## EVALUATION

### **Iconic Image Analysis (Essay #1): 30%**

Assigned: January 9, 2023

Due: February 1, 2021 (5:00pm EST)

Length: 750-1000 words (3-4 typed pages)

Select and analyze one “image icon”. You may select your image from the art world (painting, drawing, print, sculpture, photography, etc.) or popular culture (film, television, news media, advertising, magazines, video games, music videos, etc.). Explain why you think the image selected is iconic and what it signifies. Consider the ways in which its

“meaning” and “value” have been generated. In other words, why does it mean what it does? How did it accrue specific meanings and values? Does your image icon have multiple (even contradictory) meanings and, if so, why might this be the case?

If *applicable*, you may also consider the following:

Has your image icon appeared in several contexts and/or media and, if so, a) how does each context/medium inform its meaning and interpretation and b) does its meaning/value change depending on the context/medium in which it appears?

\*\*\*Note: Please consult *Practices of Looking* for a definition of “Image Icons” (also known as “Iconic Images”). This assignment is not asking you to employ the term “iconic” in the Peircean sense.

Essays must be doubled-spaced and submitted through our OWL course site by the deadline. Late essays will receive a 1% penalty per day. For example, if an essay worth 30% of your final grade is due Monday but submitted on Tuesday, the maximum mark you can receive is 29/30. Sources referred to must be cited according to the **Chicago Manual of Style** and a full bibliography included.

### **Representation of Art on Film or Television Analysis (Essay #2): 40%**

Assigned: March 1, 2021

Due: April 9, 2021 (5:00pm EST)

Length: 1500-1750 words (6-7 typed pages)

#### **Topic:**

Critically analyze a film or television program/episode that engages with artworks, artists, the artworld, or the history of art. For example, you may select an educational television program or documentary that offers a history of a specific period or art movement, a popular film that presents a biography of an artist, a film or television program that features well-known or fictional artworks, or a film or television program that deals with an issue central to the art world (e.g. art theft, forgery, museums, etc.). With reference to **relevant** concepts and ideas addressed in class and in your readings, perform a close visual analysis of the programs/images chosen. You may also compare and contrast your case study with others if you feel it strengthens your argument or adds depth to your analysis. If you need help with this assignment, please make an appointment to discuss your ideas at least several weeks in advance of the deadline.

Essays must be doubled-spaced and submitted to Turnitin.com through the OWL course site by 5pm on the due date. Late essays will receive a 1% penalty per day. For example, if an essay worth 40% of your final grade is due Friday but submitted on Saturday, the maximum mark you can receive is 39/40. Sources referred to must be cited properly and a full bibliography in Chicago Style included. Include all necessary visual documentation with your essay (screen grabs or links to clips analyzed).

<b>Forum Posts: Image/Link Submissions and/or Short Responses: 30%</b>
--

Complete **6** of the following 8, worth 5% each. (You may complete more than 6 and only the best 6 will be counted toward your grade)

**Due:** various dates, see weekly schedule below.

Length: 200-250 words each

Please note: The weekly readings will assist you in completing some of these short assignments. You will find definitions of the key terms “appropriation” and “the gaze” in the Sturken and Cartwright textbook. Collectively, these responses will constitute an online discussion and, as such, what you submit will be viewable by your peers. Please take some time to look at submissions from your fellow students in order to see the broad range of images and perspectives that comprise the field of possible responses to the following issues. This is an opportunity for you to produce knowledge for the class and, also, to learn from each other.

**Forum Post #1: Iconic Image (Due January 20)**

Submit one image (or a link to an image) that you think is iconic – according to Sturken and Cartwright’s definition in this week’s reading – and describe its significance to you in 200-250 words. (Consider this practice for the first essay!)

**Forum Post #2: Reflection on Violent Images (Due January 27)**

Reflect in 200-250 words on the value of, or issues associated with, iconic images that show violence.

**Forum Post #3: Appropriated Image (Due February 3)**

Submit one image (or a link to an image) that involves the appropriation of an artwork or still/screen grab from a film. Write a 200-250 word analysis of what you think the author of the image is trying to say.

**Forum Post #4: The Gaze in Art or Film (Due February 10)**

With reference to a specific film or work of art, write a 200-250 word reflection on how the gaze operates in, or is complicated by, your example.

**Forum Post #5: Art about Film (Due February 17)**

Submit one image (or a link to an image) of an artwork that is about some aspect of the cinema. In 200-250 words, reflect on what that artwork is attempting to tell us about film.

**Forum Post #6: *Frida* Question (Due March 3)**

In 200-250 words, answer one of the following questions about the film *Frida*:

1. Why might the life and work of Frida Kahlo lend themselves to cinematic representation?

2. Which facets of the mythic/stereotypical artist figure (as established by art historical biographical monographs) are reproduced in *Frida*? Consider both Frida and Diego Rivera.
3. How does Julie Taymor's film *Frida* represent art and artmaking? Consider the implications of the use of *tableaux vivant* and the references to Surrealism.

**Forum Post #7: Television and Art Historical Knowledge (Due March 17)**

With reference to an example (a 5-10 minute excerpt) from a television documentary on art history, discuss in 200-250 words what constitutes knowledge about art. In other words, what information was offered about art? What was said? What was shown? What was stressed/privileged as vital information about art?

**Forum Post #8: Art on Television/Television on Art (Due March 24)**

In 200-250 words, describe an example of how art or an aspect of the artworld has been represented on television OR describe an example of how art has critique, explored, or otherwise engaged with television.

**Content Warning:** This course will show material representing violence. As such, some photographs and videos may be disturbing. Please be advised.

**General Course Policies: A Snapshot**

1. Late Assignments: Students are expected to complete all assignments on time. Extensions will be given *only* upon official notification from the student's faculty advisor documenting bereavement or serious health issues.
2. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. For information concerning UWO's Plagiarism and Academic Offenses (Scholastic Offences) consult the Western Academic Calendar.
3. Emails:
  - a. Assignments will not be accepted through email.
  - b. Be sure to keep emails brief and to the point and use standard formatting.
  - c. Be sure to identify your name and contact information in the email.
  - d. I will make every effort to reply to your email within two business days.
4. I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus throughout the term. Should a change be required, you will be given prior notice.
5. All students will conduct themselves online in a manner consistent with the Code of Student Conduct and treat all members of the University community with respect.

**Western University  
Visual Arts Department**

**Prerequisite Checking:**

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

**Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism, which may be defined as “The act or an instance of copying or stealing another’s words or ideas and attributing them as one’s own,” will not be tolerated. (Citation excerpted from Black’s Law Dictionary, 1999, 7th ed., p. 1170). This includes presenting the visual or aural work of another creator as your own. Visual or Aural Plagiarism may involve both hand-based media such as drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture, as well as digital media such as photography, video and sound. It includes work subsequently manipulated or transferred between different media, as well as self-plagiarism – work submitted for assignments previously produced and graded for another course. Similar to textual plagiarism, all student work involving the visual or aural work of others must be appropriately cited/identified whether in print or orally. Failure to do so will lead to similar academic penalties as those identified in Western’s Academic Calendar.

**Student Conduct:**

All students will conduct themselves in a manner that will be consistent with the maturity and academic integrity expected of university students. Student conduct shall be consistent with the general laws of the community and with University regulations. Students shall show regard and respect for the rights, safety, and property of all members of the University community and are expected to act in a responsible manner within the University and the community at large.

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/code\\_of\\_conduct.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/code_of_conduct.pdf)

**Academic Sanctions:**

In instances of non-payment of prescribed tuition and other fees, the University shall seal the academic record. When an academic record is sealed, the student will not be able to: a) view grades; b) register in future courses; c) receive transcripts or a degree diploma; d) obtain admission or readmission.

The above prohibitions shall be in force until such time as indebtedness to the University, including payment of fee for removal of the seal, has been cleared to the satisfaction of the University.

[http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&Command=showCategory&Keywords=academic%20sanctions&SubHeadingID=169&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading\\_169](http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&Command=showCategory&Keywords=academic%20sanctions&SubHeadingID=169&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_169)

**Additional Course Material Request Policy**

For online courses the material may be presented in a variety of ways at the instructor’s discretion. Requests for additional material can only be made in cases necessitating academic accommodation. If a student requires Academic Accommodation for the course material, they can contact Western’s Academic Support & Engagement department. <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/>

**Academic Consideration:**

The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet their academic responsibilities.

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the appropriate Dean's office (the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration/home Faculty) together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. These documents will be retained in the student's file, and will be held in confidence in accordance with the University's Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy. Once the petition and supporting documents have been received and assessed, appropriate academic accommodation shall be determined by the Dean's Office in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements for classes/labs/tutorials, arranging Special Exams or Incompletes, re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawals without academic penalty. Academic accommodation shall be granted only where the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete their academic responsibilities. (Note – it will not be sufficient to provide documentation indicating simply that the student “was seen for a medical reason” or “was ill.”)

Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.

Documentation from Family Physicians/Nurse Practitioners and Walk-In Clinics A Western Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is required where a student is seeking academic accommodation. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. An SMC can be downloaded at [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

At the time of illness, students should make an appointment with a physician/nurse practitioner at Student Health Services. During this appointment, request a Student Medical Certificate from the Physician/Nurse Practitioner.

Students should request that an SMC be filled out. Students may bring this form with them, or request alternative Emergency Department documentation. Documentation should be secured at the time of the initial visit to the Emergency Department. Where it is not possible for a student to have an SMC completed by the attending physician, the student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that their ability to meet their academic responsibilities was seriously affected.

Instructors are encouraged, in the first instance, to arrange participation requirements and multiple small assignments in such a way as to allow students some flexibility.

### **Accommodation by Instructor for work worth less than 10% of the overall grade in a course**

A student seeking academic accommodation for any work worth less than 10% must contact the instructor.

### **Attendance:**

Under university regulations, if someone misses more than 15% of their classes (15% is equivalent to missing 8 hours of Lecture and/or Studio Lab, due to absence or lateness, or a combination of both, per semester) without written corroboration for health or bereavement, students can be debarred from participation in final evaluations and/or assignments.

Note that if a student is consistently absent from a 3-hour class for 1 hour, they will exceed the 15% cutoff and be debarred; assignments may stop being accepted and such assignments will receive a mark of 0 (zero)

### **Religious Accommodation**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

### **Electronic Devices:**

**During Exams:** Unless you have medical accommodations that require you to do so, or explicit permission from the instructor of the course, you may not use any electronic devices during any tests, quizzes, midterms, examinations, or other in-class evaluations.

**During Lectures and Tutorials:** Although you are welcome to use a computer during lecture and tutorial periods, you are expected to use the computer for scholastic purposes only, and refrain from engaging in any activities that may distract other students from learning. From time to time, your professor may ask the class to turn off all computers, to facilitate learning or discussion of the material presented in class. **Unless explicitly noted otherwise, you may not make audio or video recordings of lectures – nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.**

### **Normal Building Access (September 1st to April 30th) (Subject to change):**

The John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be closed at 10:00pm each night Monday to Friday. There will be no after-hour access for undergraduate students. The Centre is open weekends 12:00pm-5:00pm unless otherwise posted; access by side entrances only. Students should be prepared to vacate the building promptly at 10:00pm and 5:00pm. You must also sign-in with the building monitors when working in the workshop areas outside of regular office hours.

### **Permission re: Promotion:**

You grant permission for Western University to reproduce your name, information describing your artwork, representations of your work and any other information you have provided for the purpose of display, promotion and publicity either now or in the future.

By installing your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you grant Western University an irrevocable, perpetual, royalty-free world-wide licence to photograph your artwork and use such photograph(s) for the promotion of your artwork and/or Western University, including, without limitation, advertising, display, editorial, packaging, promotion, television, social media, the Department of Visual Arts website, flickr, Twitter, Instagram etc.). Students wishing to not have their work photographed should not exhibit it in the Visual Arts Centre, Artlab Gallery or Cohen Commons. As the area is open to the public, students, faculty, staff and other visitors will not be prohibited from photographing your artwork while on exhibit at the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre.

You otherwise retain all ownership in your artwork.

### **Artwork Installation Liability Release:**

You understand that the area where your artwork will be hanging or displayed is unsupervised and is in a part of the building that may be open to the public, day and evening, whether or not the building is open. Western University accepts no responsibility for damage to, or loss of,



artwork at any time while on display or while being transported to or from the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre. By displaying your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you accept all risk of loss or damage to your artwork. Western University does not provide insurance for the artwork on exhibition. If you wish to insure artwork, it is your responsibility to do so.

### **Removal:**

Western University reserves the right to dispose of artwork not picked up by April 15th of each year.

### **Support Services:**

There are various support services around campus and these include, but are not limited to:

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Academic Support and Engagement <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Health and Wellness <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519.661.3030 (during class hours) or 519.433.2023 after class hours and on weekends.

### **Health and Wellness:**

Western offers a variety of counselling services and several mental health resources for students. If you or a friend are feeling overwhelmed, confused or unsure of your mental health state, please don't ignore it. There are steps you can take to help yourself or help others. Western provides several on-campus health-related services to help engage in healthy living while pursuing your degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students receive membership in Western's Campus Recreation Centre. Further information regarding health and wellness-related services available to students may be found at <http://www.health.uwo.ca/>.

If you are in emotional or mental distress should refer to Mental Health Support at Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

### **Gender Neutral Bathrooms:**

Middlesex College does not have specifically gender-neutral bathrooms. There are two gender neutral bathrooms in the JLVAC. One is located in the Artlab and is open only during Artlab hours. A second single stall gender neutral bathroom can be found on the third floor of the JLVAC. Here is the full list of inclusive washrooms at UWO: [http://www.uwo.ca/equity/doc/inclusive\\_washrooms.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/equity/doc/inclusive_washrooms.pdf).

Please contact the Administrative Officer, Meghan Edmiston ([meghan.edmiston@uwo.ca](mailto:meghan.edmiston@uwo.ca)), for card access to the elevator and stairs if you are in need of the 3rd floor gender neutral/accessible washroom for the academic year.

## **VISUAL ARTS Art History/Museum and Curatorial studies Grade Descriptors**

**90-100 (Outstanding, A+)** The writing shows significant originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Sophisticated synthesis and analysis of the theoretical and conceptual dimensions of the topic are demonstrated. Mastery of complex material and ideas is immediately evident. The topic is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the background research is exemplary. Regarding research, all major secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted and proper citation has been used.

**80-89 (Excellent, A)** The writing shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Writing is probing through the use of comments and/or questions, and is clearly focused and logically organized. The quality of writing immediately engages the reader. Mastery of complex materials and ideas is demonstrated. The writing is of appropriate length, and demonstrates mastery of techniques so that results are meaningful and not simplistic. Regarding research, a majority of the secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted and proper citation has been used.

**75-79 (Very Good, B+)** The writing shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. Written claims are supported by ample evidence and the components of the topic are well-researched and presented. The work is addressed in reasonable depth and/or breadth and covers material appropriate to the course. Written analysis is organized around focal points and the development of the argument is easily followed. The writer demonstrates an above average ability to write in an intelligible style and to condense material meaningfully and with a concern for priorities of that material. Regarding research, a representative selection of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted and proper citation has been used.

**70-74 (Good, B)** The writing shows a satisfactory attempt at analysis and critical thinking. Written claims are supported by reasonable evidence. The work is addressed in some depth and/or breadth, with references to the appropriate literature and course material. Written analysis is organized around focal points. The text is generally well written and well argued. Regarding research, a somewhat limited selection of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted and proper citation has been used.

**60-69 (Competent, C)** The writing demonstrates adequate engagement with the topic. The writing is on topic and is a reasonable response to material covered in the course, but goes no further. Written facts are stated accurately; the quality of writing is sufficiently intelligible with enough elaboration and enough connections made between ideas to permit a reader to understand the point of the text. Regarding research, an insufficient number of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted but proper citation has been used.

**50-59 (Marginal, D)** The writing shows less than adequate engagement with the topic and with the material covered by the course. The writing is a less than adequate summary of sources and/or is considerably off-topic. Written facts are stated inaccurately or ambiguously; the writing style is difficult to follow; there is insufficient elaboration to permit reader's comprehension of relations among ideas; little judgment is shown in selecting detail for inclusion in the text. Regarding research, few secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted; proper citation may or may not have been used.

**Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)** The writing demonstrates a failure to comprehend the topic. Written material is disorganized and unintelligible. The work clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment. Regarding research, secondary sources pertaining to the topic have not been consulted and proper citation has not been used.